

CPYRGHT

Point of view

New CIA chief

By Roscoe Drummond

Washington

After searching for nearly a year to find the right person to head the Central Intelligence Agency, President Johnson has finally come up with "the man nobody knew"—retired Vice-Admiral William F. Raborn Jr.

Almost nobody, either newspaper reporters or newspaper readers, knew anything about Admiral Raborn when his name popped out of the President's press conference at a recent weekend in Texas.

"The man nobody knew" is soon to become director of the CIA and, as such, one of the three or four most influential officials in Washington.

Not on the list

How did Mr. Johnson decide that Admiral Raborn was the man he wanted?

The President had been pondering candidates for some time. But Admiral Raborn was not on a list of names proposed by the Pentagon.

He was not on a list of names advanced by retiring CIA Director John A. McCone and others at the CIA.

He wasn't on anyone's list for quite a while.

The President was not satisfied with the range of choice which appeared to be open to him. Whereupon he asked his special talent-search assistant, John W. Macy Jr., chairman of the Civil Service Commission to take a wholly fresh look and to come up with some new candidates.

After weeks of search Mr. Macy did come up with new names—but only one candidate. His first, second, and third choice was Vice-Admiral William F. Raborn Jr.

The more the President checked on Admiral Raborn, the more he liked what he found.

Tough taskmaster

He found that here was an admiral who could not only get along with ordinary admirals but with the supertalented loner, Admiral Hyman Rickover—and also with prima-donna scientists, engineers, industrialists, assorted civilians, and even congressmen.

He found that in managing the team which developed the Polaris missile, Admiral Raborn was a tough taskmaster who usually won his way through persuasion.

He found that the admiral was a natural "manager." He had to be because producing the complex ingredients of Polaris was the kind of job a chef has in bringing 50 dishes to a perfection on the front burner at the same moment. To do this he developed a tight program-evaluation-review technique which was so successful it has been widely adopted by industry.

Finally, after Mr. Macy told the President "Raborn is your man," Mr. Johnson asked 10 different people he trusted to make an independent check on Admiral Raborn and give him their candid judgment. The admiral may or may not turn out to be this good, but the President got 10 A-plus endorsements. His search was over.

Job filled

Obviously Admiral Raborn's fitness to direct with wisdom and prudence the vast, delicate activities of intelligence can only be proved on the job. But one criticism of the appointment—that it signals the military take-over of a major arm of the government—is without foundation. For these reasons:

1—Admiral Raborn was not the choice of the military.

2—He was chosen not because of his uniform, but because during the course of his military-industrial career he revealed the qualities the President felt were needed.

3—The White House has upgraded the intelligence professionals by naming a CIA career officer as deputy director.

4—Nobody, military or civilian, is going to take over any part of the Johnson administration from Lyndon Johnson.

The head of the CIA does not make the policy. But he operates at the center of policy formulation in the National Security Council and his "intelligence estimates" powerfully shape policy decisions the President makes.

This is why Mr. Johnson has taken such pains in filling the job.